

Mark's Day 2007

What better way to honour a local sporting hero, taken far too early from us, than by putting on a football-fest he would be proud of. Mark's Day was organized by Horsley football club, the Jovial Forester and the Comrades club with a huge amount of help from Mark's friends and took place on a baking Saturday in July on the playing fields at Horsley.

There were so many people who wanted to take part, that four football matches were played back-to-back. Horsley United fielded three sides, Horsley 'Legends' fielded two, Mark's workplace Schlumberger fielded a team, as did the Comrades and the Jovial Forester. The Jovials beat the Comrades and Horsley United won against Schlumberger and the two Legends sides. The Horsley Legends, made up of ex-Horsley players, may have been a bit longer in the tooth these days, but they still showed the youngsters a thing or two about the fierce tackling that made teams of yesteryear scared to play them.

As well as a celebration of football, Mark's Day was raising money towards the Horsley Pavilion, a project that Mark was always keen to contribute to, through volunteering to work at various fundraising events over the years. Mark's Day raised just over a staggering £3,000 towards the Pavilion. Around 500 people were there during the day with off-the-pitch entertainment including a bouncy slide, roundabouts, a milk bar, ice cream and candy floss for the kids and beer tent, barbecue and auction for the grown-ups.

There were so many people, referees, players, clubs, pubs and companies involved in organizing the event, staffing stalls, donating prizes and goodies for the raffle and a big thank-you goes to everyone who contributed. Mark would have been very proud indeed.

Many people have asked where they can get a copy of the poem read out at Mark's funeral. Here it is:

A message to you from Mark

Don't stand at my grave and weep
I am not there, I do not sleep
I'm there at every night of fun
The sponsored walks, the training runs

I'm there when someone draws your beer
For England games with you I'll cheer
I'm in your close-fought snooker frame
The double top to win the game

I'm in the clearance off the line
The sporting tour, the FA fine
When you knock down the final pin
That's me who's singing for the win

I'm with you when you're at the bar
In every passing, booming car
And every spiky head you see
Don't laugh out loud - that will be me!

I'm in the bottom of your glass
The smoking ban can kiss my arse
I'm still your uncle, son and brother
Your loyal friend, to some, your lover.

So don't stand at my grave and cry.
I am not there; I did not die.